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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
**Security Committee**

9 July 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
Acting Director, Intelligence Community Staff

FROM:   
Chairman

*SLP* 10 JUL 1984 25X1

SUBJECT: Talking Points for PFIAB on Leaks

REFERENCE: DCI memo ER-84-2886, dated 3 July 84, subject: Leaks

Attached is a paper on leaks, as requested by reference, for use in  
discussions at the 12 July PFIAB meeting.

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Attachment:  
Talking Points on Leaks

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Talking Points on leaks for 12 July PFIAB Meeting

Rhetoric about leaks is at an all-time high. What we need is action, not more words. (U)

Recently, I took the unpleasant action of firing a very senior official of CIA for disclosing classified intelligence to unauthorized persons. This officer was a close and trusted professional associate who would not deliberately harm the United States. Yet he revealed information that had an adverse impact on the discipline that is indispensable to intelligence collection and production. (C)

Leakers have become secure in the knowledge that they will not suffer punishment. No matter how painful it may be, senior officials must make it known that subordinates who reveal classified intelligence information to unauthorized persons, including journalists, will be penalized severely--and they must follow through on their warnings. (C)

Subordinates who leak in support of their principals' policies are permitting individual loyalties to supersede loyalty to the United States. Leaking for the "right reasons" is just as damaging as leaking for the wrong reasons. Those principals whose interests are served by the leakers must take action. (C)

Current attitudes about leaks are so ingrained that we need a clear, unmistakable message that things have changed. Leaks will be investigated and leakers will be penalized, regardless of their motives or their status. (U)

There seems to be a prevailing belief that individual government officials are authorized to disclose classified intelligence to the media

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wholly on their own authority. This is wrong. In November 1982, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs advised cabinet officers of the President's unequivocal instructions that no one is to comment on intelligence matters without the approval of the Assistant for National Security Affairs based on the recommendations of the DCI. There is no indication that these instructions have been followed. (S)

It appears that anybody who wishes to do so can make "authorized statements" about classified matters. If special cases must be entertained, so be it. But when everybody is responsible, nobody is responsible. We must have a systematic approach to public disclosure of classified information that takes into account the effects of such disclosures on other departments and agencies. (C)

Despite this Administration's proclamation of a stronger stance against leaks than ever before, the leak situation is not improving. A study now underway reflects 285 publications of unauthorized disclosures of classified intelligence in the FY 1979 - FY 1983 period. The data, from the files of Intelligence Community departments and agencies, indicate the number of leaks is increasing; the number of broadcasters and publications using leaked information are increasing; and the time lag between the production of intelligence reports and their publication by the media is decreasing. (S)

Those who disclose classified intelligence to the media seem to believe they are justified because they serve a higher cause. Let's look at some recent leaks to see if their self-serving attitude is justified.

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- [REDACTED] 25X1
- News stories on communication intercepts, [REDACTED] 25X1
  - [REDACTED] clearly damage our 25X1
  - capability to collect intelligence. [REDACTED] 25X1
  - Detailed reports of properly approved covert action [REDACTED] 25X1
  - not only caused direct damage to US efforts [REDACTED] 25X1
  - [REDACTED] 25X1
  - [REDACTED] 25X1
  - jeopardized both direct and foreign liaison sources of information on 25X1
  - nuclear proliferation. [REDACTED] 25X1

The damage done by leaks is well illustrated by these few examples. It is time to take action to halt these self-inflicted wounds. While it is unlikely that drastic changes can be made overnight, there are some relatively modest, primarily administrative, things that can be done. [REDACTED] 25X1

The advice of the PFIAB to the President on the matter of leaks should, in my opinion, include the following items:

- Cabinet officials should be told by the President that he expects them to take vigorous action to investigate unauthorized disclosures of classified intelligence and other national security information. He should hold them personally responsible for identifying and penalizing those who make such disclosures.
- The President should establish, and monitor adherence to, a system for reporting, in advance, all contemplated public discussions of classified information. For intelligence matters, the DCI should be the focal point for such reporting.

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- Executive Branch officials who speak to the press about classified matters should insist upon being quoted by name. Anyone not taking this individual responsibility would be in violation of Administration policy and subject to disciplinary action by the President.
- The President should issue orders that unauthorized disclosures referred to the FBI for investigation should be followed to a full conclusion, i.e., until the individual who made the disclosure is identified or until there are no leads to further investigation. If it turns out that the disclosure was authorized, both the source and the authorizing official should be identified for the investigative record.
- The President should seek Congressional support for legislation to criminalize the unauthorized disclosure of classified information by a cleared person to an uncleared individual. (C)

If the President can mobilize the Executive Branch to counter the crippling effects of unauthorized disclosures through these measures, headway can be made. His leadership will have to be followed down through the ranks if we are to succeed. (U)

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